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EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL FACILITIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Distribution of school facilities has been a challenge with many schools from different States in Nigeria. It has been observed that school facilities have not been equitably distributed to schools even when there is evidence of funding of the capital projects. Equitable distribution of school facilities is a prerequisite to the realization of secondary education goals and objectives. This paper discussed the equitable distribution of school facilities with a particular focus on Imo State secondary schools. Considering that secondary education occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's education system because of its process of preparing the students for useful living within the society and for higher education, this broad aims of secondary education make this form of education imperative in terms of facility distribution. This paper examines the concepts of school facilities, classification of school facilities which include: instructional, recreational, residential, health and general purpose. Highlights were made on problems of facilities distribution in secondary schools such as poor budgetary allocation to the education sector, poor human resource recruitment, incorrect data, politicization, poor supervision, and rural-urban migration. Some ways to ensure equitable distribution of facilities were highlighted as needs identification, inventory survey, adequate specification, and enrolment rate.

Keywords: School Facilities, Equitable, Distribution, Provision, Rural, Urban, Secondary education, Teaching, Learning.

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INTRODUCTION

School facilities are veritable tools for educational delivery. The facilities provide a physical environment that is comfortable, safe, secure, accessible, well illuminated, well ventilated, and aesthetically pleasing for the achievement of educational goals. The school facility is much more than a passive container of the educational process: it is, rather, an integral component of the conditions of learning. Educational facilities are important for the enhancement of effective

teaching and learning processes, and the overall functioning of the school system. The contribution of educational facilities to the success of educational programs cannot be overemphasized because they are critical in the educational system ().

In an educational institution, facilities include all the things that are needed for effective teaching and learning process to take place (Lawson & Gede, 2011). It is the physical expression of the curriculum, that is, the curriculum is manifested in the availability of the facilities in schools that come to play directly or indirectly in educating a child. Educational facilities are essential inputs that create a favorable learning environment, facilitates interaction and enhance the achievement of educational objectives (Oyesola, 2007). These inputs include permanent and semi-permanent structures such as machinery, laboratory, classrooms, library, whiteboard, laboratory equipment, and computers. According to Emenalo (2007), School facilities are the entire scope of physical infrastructural facilities that are provided in schools to educate a child. The improvement of qualitative education and achievement of educational objectives through sufficient provision and distribution of school facilities to all schools irrespective of location are therefore imperative.

Schools are situated in different localities. This is to give education access to all school-age children in the different localities of the nation. The schools are to be provided with adequate school facilities for the achievement of educational goals. This calls for the principle of equitable distribution of school facilities. Adiele et al. (2017) quipped that the principle of equitable distribution advocates equitability in the distribution of and accessibility to all provided learning resources no matter where the school is located. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) stated that all secondary schools in the country through adequate planning be provided with adequate facilities. The policy also points out that these educational facilities would in no small measure help learners (students) to aspire higher in their educational pursuit and inspire them with a desire for self- improvement, and achievement for excellence. Hence, this chapter discusses the equitable distribution of school facilities in secondary schools.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Secondary Education

Secondary education is the second tier of education which follows immediately after primary education. It is referred to as post-primary education which is a bridge between primary and tertiary education. Apart from serving as a link between primary and tertiary education, it provides an opportunity for a child to acquire additional knowledge, skills, and traits beyond the primary level. The main purpose of acquiring secondary education especially in Nigeria is that the education given at the primary level is not all that enough for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative and numeracy skills expected from him or her at the end of the training (Chinedu, 2011, Ololube, 2017). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) defines secondary education as "the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage." It spells out the broad goals of secondary education thus: to prepare the individuals for useful living within the society and higher education. To achieve these goals, the document further states that secondary education shall:

...provide all primary school leavers with opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background; offer

diversified curriculum to cater for the difference in talents, opportunities, and future roles; provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades; develop and promote Nigerian languages, arts and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage: inspire its students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence; foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity; raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, and respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizen; and provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development (FRN, 2014).

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's education system because of its process of preparing the students for useful living within the society and for higher education. Secondary education covers two phases on the International Standard Classification of Education scale. Level 2 or lower secondary education (less common junior secondary education) is considered the second and final phase of basic education, and level 3 (upper) secondary education is the stage before tertiary education. Every country aims to provide basic education, but the systems and terminology remain unique to them.

Secondary education usually takes place after six years of primary education and is followed by higher education, vocational education or employment. Like primary education, in most countries, secondary education is compulsory, at least until the age of sixteen (16). Children usually enter the lower secondary phase around age eleven (11). Compulsory education sometimes extends to age nineteen (19). Since 1989, education has been seen as a basic human right for a child; Article 28, of the Convention on the Right of the Child, states that primary education should be free and compulsory while different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, should be available and accessible to every child.

ISCED (1997) describes seven levels that can be used to compare education internationally. Within the country, these can be implemented in different ways with different age levels and local denominations. The seven levels are:

- Level 0 – Pre-primary education;
- Level 1 – Primary education or first stage of basic education;
- Level 2 – Lower secondary education or second stage of basic education;
- Level 3 – (Upper) secondary education;
- Level 4 – Post-secondary non-tertiary education;
- Level 5 – First stage of tertiary education;
- Level 6 – Second stage of tertiary education.

Within this system, Level 1 and 2 that is, primary education and lower secondary education together form basic education. Beyond that, national governments may attach the label of secondary education to Level 2 through 4 together, Level 2 and 3 together, or Level 2 alone. These level definitions were put together for statistical purposes, and to allow the gathering of comparative data nationally and internationally. They were approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 29th session in November 1997. The start of lower secondary education is characterized by the transition from the single-class-teacher, who delivers all content to a cohort

of pupils, to one where content is delivered by a series of a subject specialist. Its educational aim is to complete the provision of basic education (thereby completing the delivery of basic skills) and to lay the foundations for lifelong learning. Lower secondary education is likely to show these criteria:

- Entry after some 6 years of primary education;
- The requirement for more highly qualified teachers teaching only within their specialism;
- Exit to level 3 courses, or vocational education, or employment after 9 or more total years of education.

The end of lower secondary education often coincides with the end of compulsory education in countries where that exists.

(Upper) secondary education starts on the completion of basic education, which also is defined as completion of lower secondary education. The educational focus is varied according to the student's interest and future direction. Education at this level is usually voluntary. Upper secondary education is likely to show these criteria:

- Entry after some 9 years of basic education
- The typical age at entry is between 14 and 16 years
- All teachers have level 5 qualification in the subject they are teaching
- Exit to level 4 or 5 courses or direct employment.

More subjects may be dropped, and increased specialism occurs. Completion of upper secondary education provides the entry requirement to level 5 tertiary education, the entry requirement to technical or vocational education (level 4, non-tertiary course), or direct entry into the workplace. These broad aims of secondary education make this form of education imperative in terms of facility distribution. This informs the researcher to examine the level of provision and distribution of school facilities in public rural and urban secondary schools in Imo State.

School Facilities

School facilities have been defined from different perspectives by different authorities. The perspectives have been given for a better understanding of what facilities represent. School facilities are the entire school plant which the school administrators, teachers, and learners use for the smooth and efficient management of any educational institution, for the main objective of bringing about the effective and purposeful teaching and learning experience (Asiyai, 2012). Asiabaka (2008) stated that school facilities are the material resources provided for staff and students to optimize their productivity in the teaching and learning process. School facilities are the material and physical resources that promote effective teaching and learning in schools. Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2003) posited that they are the things which allowed a skillful teacher to acquire a level of instructional effectiveness when they are provided rather than when they are not available. In the same vein, Knezevich as cited in Nwokocha and Anyanwu (2012) describe school facilities as the space interpretation of the school curriculum. The implication one can deduce from the definition is that the school facility gives meaning to the planned curricular and co-curricular activities carried out in the school. It means that without the school facilities, the implementation of the school curriculum for teaching and learning will not be achieved.

Khan and Iqbal (2012) cued into this view when they opined that adequate and quality school facilities are the basic ingredients for quality education and to achieve the intended goal of the school program. Non-availability of school facilities will make teaching unproductive and the needed learning will not be realized. On the same hand, Castaldi as cited in Peretemode (2001) stated that educational facilities are those things of education which enables a skillful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. It becomes important that these school facilities are provided and equally distributed to smooth the progress of the success of the school system. According to the Institute of Educational Sciences (2006), facilities can be generally defined as buildings, properties, and major infrastructure which include physical and material assets. Giving credence to this, Obasi and Asodike (2007) stated that school facilities generally refer to the building, equipment, and entire grounds or premises of educational institutions as well as other fixed or movable items of furniture which facilitate teaching and learning. The above definitions imply that facilities are enablers in education as a hoe is to a farmer in his farming work. In partnership, Ajayi (2007) and Yusuf (2008) agreed that school facilities are the machinery which includes tools and machines used in the workshop. They stated that the school site, which is the landscape on which the school's permanent and non-permanent structures are built, are also part of the school facilities. The following were also included as school facilities, equipment, vehicles, buildings, furniture, books, electrical fittings, cafeteria, water supply infrastructure, playground, lawns, parks, trees, paths, information and communication technology (ICT) and school farm or garden. This means that school facilities comprise all the items that can be found in the school premises, they are numerous so whatever materials or services that help to facilitate the teaching and learning process falls under school facilities.

The school facilities are of different types. Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015) gave a comprehensive list of school facilities as all types of buildings for academic and non-academic functions such as areas for sports and games, landscape, farms, toilets, furniture, lighting, information, and communication technology, food services, and special facilities for physically challenged. Agabi (2004) listed furniture, equipment, machines, aesthetic environment and other material resources that contribute directly or remotely to the teaching and learning process in schools as the school facilities. Ojelede, as cited in Nwankwoala (2018), describes the school plant as the buildings, playgrounds, furniture, classrooms, libraries, hostels, apparatus and equipment, school offices, blackboards, and school records. It comprises the school site and all the structures that have been put in place to aid effective teaching and learning in the school system. A school with inadequate classrooms and facilities such as chairs, lockers, libraries, textbooks, laboratories, and workshops will be scratchy for the students to learn. Regrettably, there are derisory infrastructure and facilities in many secondary schools in Nigeria (CBN, 2010).

According to Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015), students in government-owned secondary schools in the cities and towns and even most especially in the rural areas sit on floors to receive lessons, teaching and learning take place under unfavorable environment, lacking the fundamental materials, thus hindering the fulfillment of the educational objectives. In categorizing school facilities, Ogunu (2000) divided school facilities into two categories: direct teaching facilities and non-teaching facilities. From the categorization, direct-teaching facilities bear directly on the teaching and learning process while non-teaching facilities satisfy the individual's physical and emotional needs. Explaining the role of the direct-teaching and non-direct teaching facilities Asiabaka (2008) posited that:

The direct teaching facilities are used to illustrate concepts, provide an opportunity for firsthand experience, for experimentation and demonstration, scientific investigation and discovery, to provide a diversity of thoughts, for observation and inquiry, for development of scientific attitudes and skills, to protect the individual and also provide comfort. While the non-teaching facilities are used to; Increase instructional effectiveness, improve the cleanness, orderliness and safety of facilities, reduce the operational cost and life cycle cost of a building, extend the useful life of a building, increase efficiency and effectiveness of the staff and students, improve building appearance, collection and analyses data for decision making Asiabaka (2008).

According to Agabi (2004), school facilities can be classified as serving an instructional function, recreational function, residential function, general-purpose function, and health function.

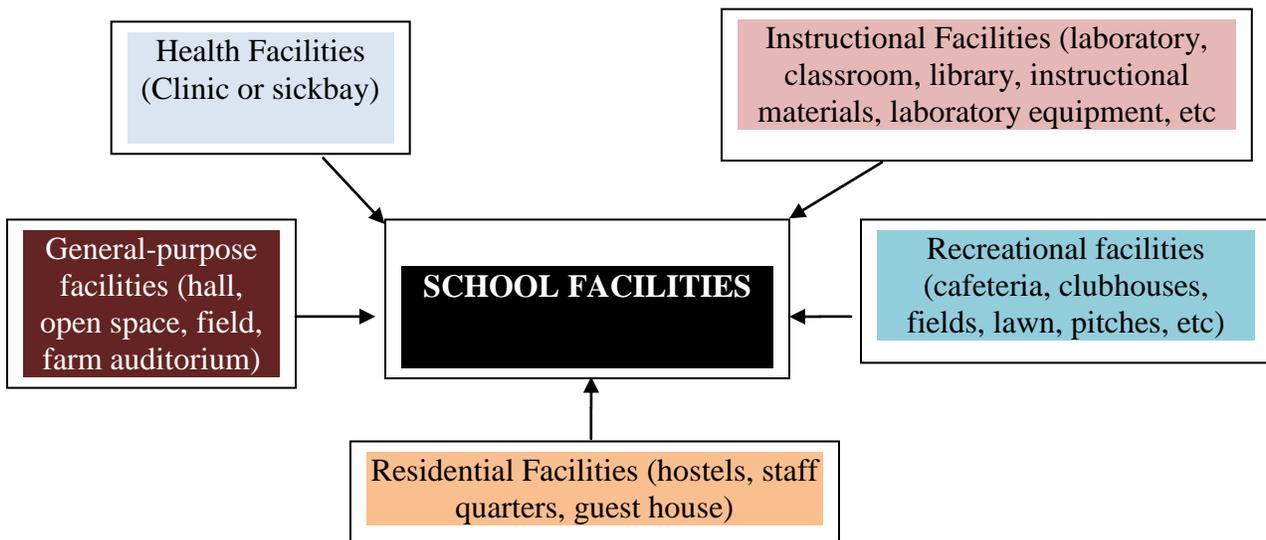


Fig.1. School Facilities Classification.

Source: Adopted from Kpee (2013: 308). The school plant planning. In Asodike et al. (Eds) *Contemporary Administration and Teaching issues in Nigerian School*.

- **Instructional Facilities:** These refer to all educational facilities that aid directly in the teaching and learning process. They include classrooms, laboratories, libraries, experimental equipment, chalkboard or whiteboard, audio-visual learning equipment, projector, zoological garden and experimental agricultural farms (Obasi & Asodike, 2007). Instructional facilities are considered of prime priority among other educational facilities because of its direct role in teaching and learning activities. As they suggest, they are those facilities that are specifically meant for direct teaching and learning. If an instruction is to achieve maximum effectiveness, learning experiences should be as direct as possible (through manipulation of objects, writing and real-life situations). That is, students should be involved in 'learning by doing'. They should utilize as many of their

senses as possible, and when all the senses are engaged, learning will usually be most effective and last long (Moore, 2005). Currently, the most widely discussed technology for teaching and learning is the personal computer. Henson (2008) described a computer as "a glorified calculator that can store or memorize a large amount of information and produce, or retrieve it on demand". In some schools, special computer laboratories have been constructed either in a separate room or in the school's media center. In some laboratories, several computers have been arranged at individual work status (Arends, Winitzky & Tannenbaum 2009:231).

- **Recreational Facilities:** Recreational facilities are those materials that are put in place during the teaching and learning process that could also be interacted with by the staff and students during their leisure hours in the school premises. These are spaces, lawns, fields, pitches, and equipment for sports, games and general recreation like a card game, chess, snooker, table tennis, etc. (indoor and outdoor game facilities). They aid in the general fitness of both staff and students. Apart from developing specific skills, they also develop a good learning socio-psychological as well as the mental environment through relaxation. The recreational facility according to Duke (2009) can be defined as a public facility, a building or place that provides a particular service or is used for a particular exercise. However, recreation or fun according to Wikipedia (2007) is the expenditure of time in a manner designed for therapeutic refreshment of one's body and mind.

Ezeanichinedu (2009) defined recreational facilities as a type of instructional material and other infrastructural facilities such as building tools, equipment that are necessary for students to learn at leisure hours. The provision of recreational facilities in the school creates several avenues whereby individual students can develop intellectually according to their potential and abilities. Umeasiegbu and Nwankwo (2012) opined that when these facilities are made available, and students utilize them, it provides escape from boredom as well as an opportunity to associate and interact with others. Team spirit is encouraged while the value system of the members such as group recognition and acceptance will be enhanced among the students. Games and sports apart from developing specific skills also develop good learning socio-psychological as well as the mental environment through relaxation. The academic workload and stresses inherent in schools or educational system demand mental and health disposition of the students, it is, therefore, necessary to find satisfactory means of defusing piled-up stresses among students before they could cause disaster.

- **Residential Facilities:** Residential facilities include hostels, staff quarters, refectory and other associated facilities meant to provide residential convenience for staff and students. It also provides shelter for staff, students and even guests. Koeu (2008) opined that there is a need to offer residential facilities in our secondary schools so that the students can concentrate on their academics and decide what they want to be in the future after completing their secondary education. However, apart from time and energy lost in the journey to and fro to school, some families are not in a position to bear the recurring cost of such transportation if students come from their homes. In other to take care of such children, hostels should be established for boys and girls to provide need-based housing assistance to the student at a reasonable cost. The type and variety of residential facilities available depend on the educational level and the level of residential services to be provided. Due to the rising cost of education amidst dwindling educational resources, the

responsibility for the provision of most residential services in most educational institutions is gradually being shifted to the private sector.

- **General Purpose Facilities:** These are facilities that can be used for the purpose(s) other than those for which they are originally meant for; that is, use of classrooms for religious activities, school auditorium for a reception during occasions, etc. No wonder Obasi and Asodike (2014) stated that facilities can easily be converted to other uses beyond their original use. These facilities in most cases are made of space facilities; there are two types of open space facilities namely: the developed and undeveloped spaces. Developed open space are spaces used as sporting pitches, fields, lawn, school farms, access road, parking lots and so on. Their uses can easily be modified as occasion arises. As stated by Asiabaka (2008), such facilities can be accessible to the community after school hours. The undeveloped open spaces are all the land areas within the legal authority of the institution which are yet to be developed into specific uses. People hardly see these as facilities, yet the aesthetic value they provide when well-kept suggests how vital they are in determining the continued survival of the educational institution. Village halls and other community buildings such as church hall and local schools, provide accessible sports, recreational, arts, and other community facilities in many rural settlements, such buildings play an important role in remote communities from purpose-built facilities. School facility does not only provide housing for the school but also serve as facilitating agents for all the educational activities that take place in a school as such they are considered indispensable to school.
- **Health Facilities:** Health facilities are places that provide health care. They include clinics, sick- bays, hospital, outpatient care centers, and specialized care centers such as birthing and psychiatric care centers (U.S Library of Medicine). A health facility is required in a school to give medical treatment to students when they have health issues. A school nurse is always in charge of the school clinic. The number and quality of health facilities in a country is one common measure of that area's prosperity and quality of life. In many countries, health facilities are regulated to some extent by law; licensing by a regulatory agency is often required before such a facility can be open for business (WHO, 2010).

School facilities are therefore all the facilities required for effective learning by the students and effective delivery of teachers in the school. The facilities are meant to ensure the safety and comfort of students and members of the school community as well as to attain effectiveness in the school responsibility of academic, social and mental transformation of its learners. School facilities, therefore, are regarded as indispensable tools for effective teaching and learning process.

Equitable Distribution of School Facilities

When it comes to the distribution of school facilities, 'equity and equality' are very dissimilar. The idea of equality indicates if per- students funding at every school should be the same. While equity centers on if less advantageous students should get more to catch up. The students who are the utmost behind- most often are students from the rural areas and they require more of these facilities to catch up, succeed and eventually close the achievement gap. Giving students who come to school lagging academically (because of some factors outside of the school's

control) the same facilities as students in the urban areas will not close the achievement gap. But making sure that schools in rural areas have access to exceptional teachers and other facilities they need to succeed will to continue bridge the gap. Ensuring that schools who need more to achieve success receive those facilities and opportunities illustrate equity in action. Equitable distribution in this study is distinct from the definition of simple equity, which has to do with being fair and impartial. The equitable distribution of school facilities here refers to the allocation of facilities in all school districts, independent of their location. As a principle, Adiele et al. (2017) asserted that equitable distribution advocates equitability in the distribution of and accessibility to all provided learning resources no matter where the school is located. Resource equity refers to the allocation and use of resources (people, time, facilities and money) to create student experiences that enable all children to reach empowering and rigorous learning outcomes no matter where the school is located (Lynch, 2011).

Resource allocation in education does not take place in a vacuum. Instead, it often reflects policy conditions that form a context in which opportunities for effective leadership can be created. For example, effective leaders know how to use data strategically to inform resource allocation decisions and to provide insights about how productivity, efficiency, and equity are impacted by allocated resources. The purposeful and practical allocation of resources to support equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities is a major component of education policy at the federal, state, and local levels (Lynch, 2011). No wonder, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) stated that all secondary schools in the country through adequate planning be provided with adequate facilities. Leaders at all levels of education are charged with making decisions about how to effectively distribute and leverage resources to support teaching and learning.

Equitable distribution ensures that school facilities are appropriately channeled to areas where they are required in the right quality and quantity to avoid over or under-utilization which amounts to wastage. This guarantees effective operation and maintenance of standards in the educational system. This enables all children to reach empowering and rigorous learning outcomes. In this respect, leaders are concerned not only with the level of resources and how they are distributed across districts, schools, and classrooms but also with how these investments translate into improved learning. The provision of educational facilities and equitable distribution, therefore, cannot be overemphasized.

Condition of Facilities Distribution in Secondary Schools in Imo State

The distribution of school facilities to achieve educational objectives in Imo State Secondary Schools has been very difficult due to the acclaimed inadequacy in the provision of these facilities. Agabi as cited in Adiele, Obasi, and Ohia (2017) stated that most secondary schools in the rural areas are poorly equipped, staffed and lack in social amenities. In the same vein, Adiele, Obasi, and Ohia (2017) surmised that schools located in the urban areas are far better equipped and staffed than those in rural areas. This situation is not exceptional in Imo State. Most people think that there is an existing gap in the distribution of teaching and learning facilities between urban and rural secondary schools in Imo State, thereby creating the problem of learning and teaching to students and staff. A school that is lacking in these facilities affects the morale of the teachers and students. It discourages learning and can be said to make teaching ineffective.

This situation does not augur well to the education of students of secondary education. Adesina as cited in Abraham (2003) posited that "the quality of education that our children get bears direct relevance to the availability or the lack of physical facilities and overall atmosphere

where the learning takes place. Pheko (2006) also asserted that the amount of learning in schools is facilitated by the available quantity and quality of school facilities in them. Ojiri (2017) remarked that adequate provision and optimal utilization of school facilities enhance effective learning in students irrespective of the type of school. Uwheraka (2005) in his study revealed that facilities below the approved standard could also lead to a reduction in the quality of teaching and learning in schools, resulting in poor students' academic performance. Sureiman (2010) in his study, found that school infrastructure and availability of teaching requirements have a significant impact on the academic performance of secondary school pupils in Kenya. Beegle and Newhouse (2006) in their study, revealed that higher-quality imputes promote higher test scores in the public schools in Indonesia. In the same vein, Murillo & Roman (2011) submitted that infrastructure impacts on the achievement of primary education students in Latin America. However, Appah-Onyekwere (2005) remarked that if they are not adequately provided and distributed or in a bad state or repulsive condition, they can bring about a repulsive attitude to the school. School facilities must be equitably distributed to facilitate teaching and learning.

Problems of Facilities Distribution in Secondary Schools

Facilities distribution in secondary schools in recent times has contributed immensely to the present state of education in the country. However, some problems or challenges inhibit the proper distribution of facilities. The following are the challenges facing the equitable distribution of facilities in secondary schools:

- **Poor budgetary allocation to the education sector:** The percentage of the national budget allocated to education depends on certain factors which when considered will make or mar the education system. Edem as cited in Obasi and Asodike (2007) noted that such factors include the rate of national economic growth, the condition of the world market especially the price of oil which is the major foreign exchange product, the competition of other sectors of the economy and the nature of revenue for education. Budgetary allocation by the Nigeria government to the education sector is below the recommended 26% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of each country in the world as stated by UNESCO. This will no doubt impact negatively on the financial and material resources available in the secondary schools. It needs not to be overemphasized that the funding of education is becoming a burden for the government, being the major financier. Thus, all stakeholders, parents, companies, Non-Governmental Organizations should contribute to the funding and sustenance of education. Secondary school principals should mobilize members of the old students of their schools towards donating to the development of their alma mater. The government should recognize that education is synonymous with growth and development because no country grows and develops beyond its educational standard. For this reason, budget allocation for education should be equitably distributed to schools.
- **Poor human resource recruitment:** Another challenge is the recruitment of staff. Recruitment connotes all those activities designed to search for and attract the desired quality and quantity of staff to satisfy the established needs. Given the strategic role of teachers in the education process and the level of inadequacy in secondary schools, the government should recruit additional teachers and distribute them to schools where they are not enough majorly in rural schools. In the educational system, teachers are recruited

and selected by the Ministry of Education or the various Education Board after advertisement of the teaching vacancies have been made in the electronic or print media. Those recruited are then posted to different schools where their services are needed. Oftentimes, this process is poorly carried out in the sense that some of the teachers recruited are not qualified for the position or do not have the experience to handle the facilities provided. This poses a big challenge to the educational planners and the school.

- **Incorrect data:** Data is a veritable tool an educational planner needs to make good decisions and provision of educational facilities. The widespread collection of data in education has given rise to vast amounts of information. According to Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education from 2009 through 2016, “Data gives us the roadmap to reform”. It tells us where we are, where we need to go, and who most is at risk” (US Department of Education, 2009). For any facility to be adequately distributed there is the need for correct or actual data. Incorrect data is a problem confronting the distribution of school facilities. Without sufficient and up-to-date information on the population for whom such facilities are to be provided, there cannot be an efficient and equitable distribution of the school facilities.
- **Politicization:** School facility is affected when politic is taken into consideration in distributing it. The outcome of it is that some schools will be provided for more while others will be sparsely distributed. Most times, where schools are given more, they are still for political reasons located close to the abode of politicians that are in control of the government or the seat of power. A drastic step should be taken to address this imbalance to bring about equitable distribution of school facilities in schools that may promote patronage.
- **Poor supervision:** Poor supervision of the distribution of school facilities is another challenge. It is not a gainsaying that supervision plays a great role in achieving quality education in schools. There is a need for proper and adequate supervision by the Ministry of Education in schools. When these facilities are not properly supervised until it gets to the rightful destination, they can be diverted to other places or used for personal interest.
- **Location of schools:** The location of schools can aid or discourage the distribution of school facilities. For instance, when schools are located where there are no access roads, it will be difficult for the facilities to get there. But well-located schools with access road networks allows for easy distribution of the school facilities. More schools in the rural areas lack access roads and this has adversely affected the delivery of some school facilities in such areas unlike in the urban areas where the roads are accessible for quick and easy delivery.
- **Rural-Urban migration:** Migration is a huge challenge in schools as it negatively affects school population and quality education. Most of the rural dwellers that move to the urban areas attributed to the problem of distributing school facilities equitably. The majority of the families that moved from rural to urban settlement consider education better in urban more than rural areas. This then necessitates a change in population in the areas they relocated or migrated to. Teachers deployed to rural areas prefer to be redeployed to the urban areas (Adeyemi, 2009). This situation has led to an imbalance in the distribution of teachers in the state.

Effective Ways to Ensure Equitable Distribution of School Facilities

Resources according to the Economists are always inadequate in supply in various fields of human endeavors and even when they become available, they amount to nothing if not well distributed. When administrators distribute school facilities to schools, they are tasked with determining how their time and money will address educational goals. In some situations, an administrator may allocate an equal amount of facilities to every school in the State. On the other hand, even though the amount is equal, some schools may require far more facilities than others to maintain educational equity. Auta (2012) opined that the lack of equitable distribution of facilities results in depression in the students learning. Equitable distribution of the school facility means appropriate channeling of the amenities to areas where they are required in the right quality and quantity to avoid over or under-utilization which will amount to wastage. In addition to how the facilities are distributed across schools, educational planners and stakeholders must pay close attention to how these resources translate into improved learning. The rural-urban dichotomy in the provision and distribution of human and physical facility is perceptibly in Imo State Secondary Schools. Agabi as cited in Adiele, Obasi, and Ohia (2017) observed that concerning school standards, provision of facilities and distribution, the school in urban areas are considered more due to overpopulation. He further stated that most secondary schools in the rural areas are poorly equipped, staffed and lack in social amenities. As a result of this, teachers begrudge posting to such areas because of what they consider as poor social life and lack of opportunities. This is a typical experience in Imo State where most secondary schools face the challenge of adequate school facilities.

The reality of rural-urban disparity is that parents find it difficult to accept or allow their children placed in schools located in the rural communities and thus, they do everything possible in their capacity to get them into the well-endowed, famous or prestigious schools located in the urban centers where they believe that their children would make it to the tertiary institution. The current effects of rural-urban dichotomy on facilities distribution to schools are unquantifiable. It exacerbates many out-of-school students. Such a structure has an infinite capacity for the continued recycling of the poverty of the rural dwellers. This point is buttressed by the findings of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2005). According to the report, the place of residence (urban-rural) influences the likelihood that a child will be out of school. The proportion of children out of school is greater in a rural area. All things being equal, the provision and distribution of school facilities should follow the same trend since there are lofty concentrations of school age in the rural areas knowing too well that rural schools lack good facilities, they have low enrolment, less qualified teachers, fewer textbooks and other teaching and learning materials whereas urban schools are generally overstaffed with qualified teachers, over-enrolled, better funded, properly monitored or supervised, have better infrastructure and adequate resources to work with. The achievement gap between urban and rural schools is a pressing problem in this contemporary time because former methods to bridge the gap have been largely urban biased in character. School facilities can be distributed considering the following criteria:

- **Identification of Needs:** School facilities may be distributed based on the need of the school, department or units. In school organizations, facilities that are needed in schools such as teachers, books, laboratory equipment et cetera should be identified and distributed based on the need of the school. For instance, a need for some subject teachers like English, Mathematics or Sciences should be carried out wisely by getting the number

of students enrolled for the subject to know the number of teachers to provide to avoid under or overestimation. Also, the physical facilities such as classrooms, laboratory equipment, textbooks and so on should be distributed to schools based on the number of students in the school.

- **Inventory Survey:** A comprehensive diagnostic inventory survey of the existing stock of school facilities should be carried out. Inventory data has to be collected and analyzed by the education planners to provide information on the location, quantity, and type of facility needed before it can be provided and distributed to the schools. This will provide the educational map or the distributional network of the existing school facilities needed in the development of the facilities master plan. Without proper inventory data, the school administrator may not be able to itemize those facilities needed for the school.
- **Adequate Specification:** School facilities, project or program requires a specific pattern in design and implementation. Such specification could be in terms of size, quality or quantity (number) structural requirement for erecting different types of educational structures (classrooms, laboratory, library, etc) and installation of the equipment to ensure that the needs are adequately met. The school facility requires adequate specifications for proper distribution. For instance, in a situation where a school is provided with excess chairs and tables for the student in a classroom that occupies only one hundred capacity of the student, the rest will amount to wastage as there will be no classroom to keep them. All specifications must, however, be in line with the Ministry of Education requirement and must make provision for flexibility to meet the changing needs of the schools.
- **Enrolment rate:** The enrolment rate of each school need to be considered in distributing school facilities. Schools with high enrolment rates need to be given adequate facilities that will accommodate the number of students in such school. Likewise, the number of teachers that would be deployed to such schools should equate the number of students considering the student-teacher ratio.

CONCLUSION

This paper examines the equitable distribution of school facilities as it applies to secondary schools in Imo State. The provision and distribution of school facilities are very essential and is of paramount importance to all levels of education especially secondary education. Many problems related to equitable distribution of school facilities in secondary schools have been examined in this paper. They are stated as poor budgetary distribution to the education sector, incorrect data, politicization, urban-rural migration amongst others. Some effective ways to ensure equitable distribution of school facilities were proposed to overcome most of the identified problems. The achievement of secondary education objectives can be determined by the extent schools are provided with the school facilities, distributed and properly utilized.

Recommendations

The following are some recommendations made to strengthen the need for equitable distribution of school facilities in secondary schools in Imo State:

- The proper procedure for the distribution of school facilities to secondary schools should be developed by the planning section of the Ministry of Education and monitored strictly when distributing to schools.
- Principals should ensure that comprehensive assessment and regular supervision of the school facilities is carried out to determine the areas of need.
- Principals should ensure that adequate data of the school is made available for proper educational planning and resource allocation.
- The government should provide recent textbooks and resource materials in the school libraries for teachers and students to enhance their knowledge; E-library can also be provided for the schools.
- The government should make funds available to school principals for the procurement of educational facilities to enhance and improve the students' academic performance.
- All senior secondary schools should start an income-generating activity and form alumni of the old students to help raise funds to subsidize government funding.

Future Research Direction

This paper had discussed the comprehensively equitable distribution of school facilities in secondary schools. Nevertheless, it is pragmatic that the paper is not exhaustive. For that reason, future and interested researchers are gratis to modify their research towards those areas where the present study could not mention, and also broaden the geographical scope to other states in Nigeria for proper comparison.

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